

CABINET COMMITTEE ON SAFETY, SECURITY AND EMERGENCIES ON THE “FREEDOM CONVOY”

Director Talking Points

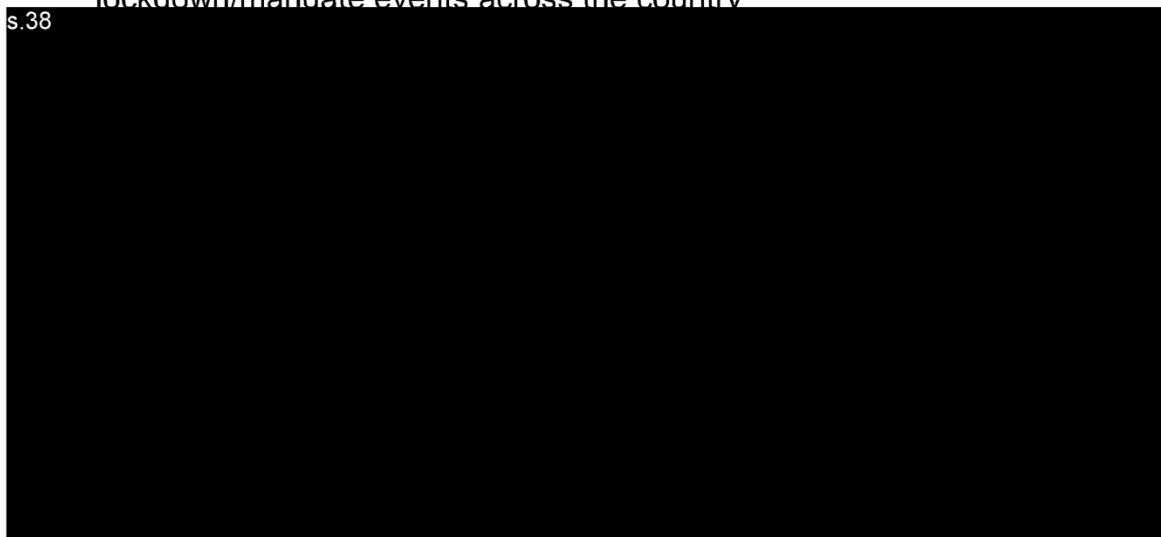
CSIS Mandate

- CSIS’ mandate is to investigate and advise the Government of threats to our national security, which are clearly defined in the *CSIS Act* as espionage and sabotage, foreign influenced-activities, terrorism and violent extremism, and subversion.
- CSIS is specifically prohibited from investigating lawful protest and dissent, except when it is accompanied by a significant threat to national security.

Freedom Convoy

- While broadly united in their opposition to public health measures that have been imposed in response to COVID 19 by the federal government, the protestors who arrived in Ottawa last week were not homogenous in either their grievances or organization.
- A very small number of flags (both purchased and self created) reflected racist and bigoted worldviews. The presence of these flags however, is not unique to this event and are often seen at anti lockdown/mandate events across the country

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- Within the broader protest, it is possible that opportunistic, low-level violence (e.g. vandalism, mischief) may continue to occur over the course of these protests.
- CSIS is unaware, at this time, of any tangible plots or plans of serious violence.
- The convergence of people on Parliament Hill, or at other protest locations, also represents an opportunity for other ideologically or religiously inspired individuals or small groups to take advantage of the situation to commit acts of violence. But we have no indication of any such threats at this time.
- CSIS assesses that the longer the Ottawa protest lasts the greater the potential for fringe elements within the broader anti-government/public health measures movements to travel to Ottawa.

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Posture

- CSIS remains engaged with the RCMP to ensure timely sharing of information.

- s.38 will continue to be carefully monitored for chatter linked to the event, particularly threats of serious violence.
- CSIS is maintaining situational awareness of developments related to any existing or planned demonstrations.

Responsive: if asked about reports of foreign interference at the event:

- CSIS is aware of reports of foreign citizens supporting the convoy, in part through donations.
- Foreign interference involves covert actions, which are detrimental to Canada's security, and an element of direction or support by a foreign state in an attempt to further foreign state interests.

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